



Working to Protect the United States From "Mad Cow Disease"

In Europe and parts of Asia, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), or "mad cow disease," has caused one of the worst public health crises since the end of World War II. It has infected more than 180,000 cattle, damaged the beef industry, and has apparently given rise to a fatal human brain disease called new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease.

Present data show that the United States is BSE-free, thanks in part to a series of vigorous actions FDA has carried out in recent years together with other federal and state agencies, veterinarians, and industry. Here are some of FDA's preventive measures:

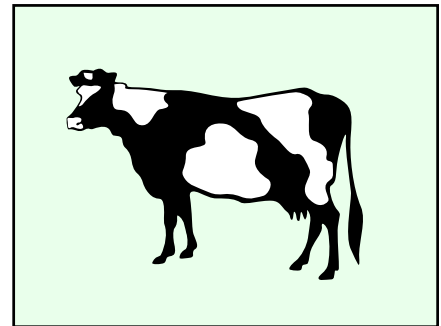
- FDA has **prohibited the inclusion of most mammalian proteins** in feed for cows and other ruminants. (BSE is believed to be spread throughout cattle herds when they consume feed that contains animal protein contaminated by the BSE-causing agent.)
- FDA has sponsored programs to **educate industry and state feed**

control officials on the requirements of the feed regulation.

- In cooperation with state authorities, the agency has carried out nearly **10,000 inspections** of animal feed production facilities and ruminant feeders to ensure compliance with the regulation.
- FDA has **detained shipments** of certain products of animal origin intended for human or animal use from more than 30 countries that are known to have, or be at high risk for, BSE in cattle.
- FDA has **recommended to producers** of human drugs, biologics, blood products, medical devices, dietary supplements, and vaccines **to use only BSE-free cattle-derived materials** in the manufacture of their products. Similar advice was given to producers of drugs and medical devices for ruminant use.
- FDA has **recommended deferral of blood donations** from individuals who have lived in the United Kingdom, the country most seriously affected by BSE, for six months or more between 1980 and 1996.
- FDA is developing a method for **detecting prohibited mammal-**

ian proteins in animal feed.

- FDA has repeatedly convened a special **advisory committee** of outside experts to advise the agency on various issues involving BSE and other transmissible spongiform encephalopathies.
- To **achieve 100 percent compliance** with the feed regulation, FDA, in cooperation with state feed inspection partners, plans to inspect all feed mills and rendering facilities, sample other feed-related facilities, and issue more guidances and regulations, if necessary.



For more information, please call 301-594-1755 or visit FDA's Web site at www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/hottopics/bse.html.